

# Michigan Child Care Matters

Department of  
Human Services

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Emergency Preparedness

## FROM THE DIRECTOR

There are many reasons people choose child care as a profession. Caring for children is extremely satisfying and rewarding. To see a child excited as she learns new skills is one of the joys we get to experience: Completing that jigsaw puzzle for the first time; creating a masterpiece at the paint easel; building a giant tower with a friend - and then knocking it down!

There is another side of child care that most people prefer not to think about. It's watching a child falling on the playground and suffering a broken arm, or the cries of a toddler whose fingers are caught in a closing door. It's huddling in the tornado shelter with six young children as a storm howls outside. Have you made the appropriate plans to address the unexpected? What do you do when there is a serious accident in your home or center?

Last year there were 290 accidents, injuries, or incidents that were reported to licensing. These included 78 children with broken bones, 26 injuries that required stitches, 7 children who were burned, and 7 deaths in child care.

There are three "L words" in child care: licensing, liability, and litigation. Licensed child care providers are afforded some level of legal protection just by being licensed as required by Michigan law. However, being licensed (or registered) is not enough. There is liability inherent in caring for another person's child. When a child has a serious accident or injury while in your care, your licensing consultant will be checking to see if you were following the licensing rules. Know the rules and

then following them! This is one of the best ways to minimize your exposure to liability and litigation. Unfortunately, following the rules cannot assure that children in your care will not have any serious accidents and injuries. But not following the rules, will almost guarantee there will be problems!

This issue focuses on emergency preparedness. I hope you never have an emergency situation at your facility because of a fire. But if you do, know that the time and effort you have spent with your children practicing to deal with the unexpected may literally save their lives.

James S. Sinnamon, Director  
Child Care Licensing Division

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This publication provides topical information regarding young children who are cared for in licensed child care settings. We encourage child care providers to make this publication available to parents of children in care, or to provide them with the Web address so they may receive their own copy. All issues are available at the Child Care Licensing Web page:

**[www.michigan.gov/dhslicensing](http://www.michigan.gov/dhslicensing)**  
**ChildCare**

## **WHAT CHILD INJURIES ARE YOU REQUIRED TO REPORT?**

Kathleen Sinnamon, Area Manager  
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Each and every day children are injured in child care. Those injuries range from minor scratches and bumps to serious injuries. For 2007, there were 111 serious injuries reported that included 78 broken bones, 7 burns and 26 requiring stitches. In addition, there were seven reported child deaths.

It is critical in all situations that the child receives immediate attention and that the parents are notified timely. For serious injuries, parents have the right to decide if their child needs immediate medical attention and how that will be handled. Serious injuries that require the department be notified include broken bones, head injuries, when stitches are required, and incidents where the child is hospitalized or receives emergency medical treatment. For minor injuries such as a scrape or scratch, the department does not need to be notified. However, the parents should be informed timely. A written "ouch" report can easily accomplish this.

Child care homes and centers are required to make a verbal report to the department within 24 hours of a serious injury, accident, illness, or medical condition of a child, occurring while a child is in care, which results in emergency medical treatment or hospitalization at a health facility, or which results in a death. A written report must then be filed with the department within 72 hours of the incident. On rare occasions, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) is able to treat the injured child at the facility instead of transporting the child to the hospital. While these circumstances do not require department notification, it is highly recommended that your consultant be notified.

Technical assistance allows a telephone call or voice mail message to meet the intent of the verbal notification. However, for serious injuries or in the case of a death, talking directly to someone is the best means of providing immediate notification to the department. The written report that must then be submitted to the department can be documented on the Incident, Accident, Illness, Death or Fire form (BCAL 4603), which is available on the department's Web site. Additionally, centers are required to maintain a copy of the written report at the center.

There is no easy way to prevent child injuries. However, providing appropriate supervision at all times and assuring that the equipment is age appropriate and safe can help reduce the number of injuries in child care.

## CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Catherine Edgar, Licensing Consultant  
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Effective December 6, 2006, all licensed child care centers are required to have a written crisis management plan in place. The crisis management plan must include steps to take in the event of an intruder or a bomb threat. In addition, it is recommended that the plan include:

- Steps to take in the event of other crises such as custody disputes, power outages, missing, lost, or abducted children, impaired parents/guardians, drive by shootings, etc.
- Phone numbers for emergency personnel.

Each child care center is unique; therefore, one cookie-cutter crisis management plan will not work for all child care centers. The center needs to consider the following in developing a good crisis management plan:

- Size of the center.
- Physical surroundings-rural or urban area.
- Layout of the center.
- Ages of the children in care at the center.
- Location of the outdoor play area.
- Which staff member will be responsible for which children.

It is important that the plan not only be written and detailed, but also be reviewed with and available to all staff at all times. It should be posted in an area where it is readily accessible to all staff yet away from any areas that visitors, including parents, have access to. Consider the following when developing a plan:

### For Evacuation:

- How will you transport children if you must leave the area?
- How will you transport non-walkers?
- Where are the emergency supplies kept and who will gather them?

- Who will have the attendance sheets and child information cards?
- Who will have the medications?

### For Lockdown:

- Who will be responsible for which children?
- What is the safest area of the building?
- Who will do head counts?
- Who will lock the doors and cover the windows, if necessary?
- What will be the warning system for a lockdown?

Some things that child care centers can do to increase their security are:

- Request that local law enforcement perform a safety inspection on your center.
- Develop a system of code words or phrases to use among staff when announcing an emergency.
- Install outside security cameras.
- Install buzzers on doors and outside gates.
- Create a two-stage entrance to the facility.
- Install mirrors on the corners of buildings.
- Issue photo I.D. badges to authorized staff and parents.
- Have a landline telephone available in each classroom.
- Ensure attendance records are available should you have to evacuate quickly.

Remember: Emergencies **will** happen and your best defense is a good offense!

**“Fail to plan, plan to fail.”**

Resources available for specific crisis management plans are available at the following Web sites:

[www.nara.affiniscape.com/  
displaycommon.cfm?an+=2](http://www.nara.affiniscape.com/displaycommon.cfm?an+=2)

[www.nccic.org](http://www.nccic.org)

[www.brighthorizons.com/  
talktochildren/docs/emergency\\_  
plan.doc](http://www.brighthorizons.com/talktochildren/docs/emergency_plan.doc)

[www.michigan.gov/document/  
msp/5-lockdown\\_template-all\\_  
182843\\_7.doc](http://www.michigan.gov/document/msp/5-lockdown_template-all_182843_7.doc)

## FIRE SAFETY IN THE CHILD CARE HOME

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The United States Fire Administration (USFA) reports that fires claim the lives of more than 4,000 Americans each year and cause about 20,000 injuries. Most of these fires occur in homes. As a home child care provider, many steps are taken to ensure fire prevention, but there are additional precautions that will help prevent a fire in your home.

The USFA reports that every 10 seconds an unwanted fire occurs in an American home, and every 60 seconds a fire occurs that is serious enough to call the fire department. Licensing rules for child care homes prohibit smoking and the use of open-flame or portable heating devices when children are in care. This decreases the chance that a flame could ignite furniture or other combustibles, resulting in a fire. The USFA warns that fires started by unattended cigarettes, open flames, or too much heat are particularly dangerous because they may smolder for a long period of time before being detected.

Combustible materials near the furnace or fuel-fired hot water heater pose a fire hazard. Combustible materials are anything that can burn, including but not limited to: paper, cardboard, clothing, wood items, plastics, sleeping cots and mattresses. Licensing rules for child care homes require that combustible materials be stored at least four feet away from the furnace and fuel-fired hot water heater.

A furnace and fuel-fired hot water heater inspection is required at each renewal. This requirement is very important because heating equipment is the second leading cause of ignition in fatal house fires. Heating equipment that is routinely inspected and kept in good repair ensures proper functioning and reduces the likelihood of a fire.

The USFA reports that cooking equipment, most often a range or stovetop, is the leading cause of home fires and injuries. These fires are usually caused by unattended cooking. While cooking for the children in your care, it is important to exercise safety precautions:

- Keep the stovetop, burners, and oven clean.

- Only use equipment designed and intended for cooking and follow the manufacture's operating instructions.
- Do not wear loose clothing (especially hanging sleeves) while cooking.
- Keep flammable materials, such as potholders or towels, away from the stove.
- Never leave food cooking on the stovetop unattended.

One of the best preventative measures is to stay alert when you are cooking. If a fire starts, you will be ready to respond. Always keep an oven mitt and a lid nearby in case there is a fire while you are cooking.

If a small grease fire occurs:

- Put on the oven mitt.
- Carefully slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
- Do not move the pan.
- Keep the lid on until the pan has completely cooled.

If a fire occurs in an oven or microwave, turn the appliance off and keep the door closed to keep the flames from escaping. Unplug the microwave if you can safely reach the outlet. Ovens and microwaves that have had a fire should be checked and/or serviced before being used again.

Electrical fires are also very dangerous. The USFA reports that most of these fires are caused by the misuse and poor maintenance of electrical appliances, incorrectly installed wiring, and overloaded circuits and extension cords. As a child care provider, a safely working electrical service is required. Possible indicators of an electrical problem are:

- Exposed, loose, frayed, or stripped wires.
- Burned wiring.
- Buzzing sound at the electrical box.
- Inappropriate use of extension cords, especially if used in lieu of permanent wiring.
- Flickering or dimming lights.

The USFA reports that the home appliances most commonly linked to electrical fires are electrical stoves and ovens, dryers, central heating units, televisions, and stereo equipment. If an appliance sputters, sparks, or emits an unusual smell, turn it off and have it professionally repaired or replace. Some safety precautions are:

- Routinely check your electrical appliances and wiring.
- Replace all worn, old or damaged appliance cords.
- Don't overload an extension cord.
- Keep electrical appliances away from wet floors and counters.
- Buy electrical appliances that meet the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) standard for safety.
- Use a three-prong plug only in a three-slot outlet or extension cord.
- Never place cords and wires under rugs or in high traffic areas.

One of the most important fire safety measures is to have working smoke detectors installed in the home. The USFA reports that a working smoke detector cuts the chance of dying in a fire by 50 percent. Child care homes are required to have working smoke detector on each level of the home, including the basement, and in all areas used for sleeping. The USFA recommends that smoke detectors not be installed in the kitchen or garage. The fumes from cooking and car exhaust are likely to activate them. If smoke detection is desired in these areas, a heat sensor can be installed.

The USFA also recommends that smoke detectors be installed on the ceiling or on an interior wall at least four, but no more than 12 inches, from the ceiling. They should also be at least three feet from

heating registers, kitchen doors, and bathrooms containing showers. If the smoke detector appears to be signaling for no reason, clean it out and check the batteries. If this does not help, replace it.

Smoke detectors should be checked each month and have a new battery installed every year. They should also be vacuumed occasionally to remove dust, insects, and cobwebs. Follow the manufacturer's recommendation for any other maintenance that is needed. Smoke detectors have a life-span of about ten years, but should be replaced even if they seem to be working correctly.

The USFA reports that half of all fatal fires occur when people are asleep. This occurs because they succumb to the smoke and toxic gases that spread throughout the home faster than the fire. Therefore, if you provide night-time care, it is especially important to make sure you have working smoke detectors that are loud enough to wake everyone in the home.

A fire extinguisher is required on each level of the home used for child care. The extinguisher must have a rating of at least 2A-10BC and be mounted no higher than five feet from the floor to the top of the extinguisher. Extinguishers should be located in an area of the home they are most likely to be needed, such as the kitchen. You should know how to operate the extinguisher so you can act quickly during a fire.

Children have a natural curiosity about fire. Keep all matches and lighters out of the reach of children, preferably in a locked cabinet. Practice fire prevention and be prepared. If in doubt, just get out. Close the door behind you to keep the fire contained and call 9-1-1.

**FIRE SAFETY  
STARTS AT HOME**

## TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT FIRE SAFETY

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Each year in the U.S. an estimated 2,800 children age 14 or younger are injured and 850 are killed in residential fires. Forty percent of these children are under the age of five and 70 percent are under the age of 10. Since many children are now being cared for on a daily basis in child care homes or centers, it is important for individuals providing care to be aware of fire safety issues.

Did you know:

- Two-thirds of children who die in home fires actually started those fires.
- Children as young as two can strike matches and start fires.
- Playing with matches is the leading cause of fire-related deaths and injuries for children younger than five.
- Two-thirds of home fires that kill children occur in homes without a working smoke alarm.
- Security bars on windows can prevent safe exiting.
- Most people do not know how to operate their fire extinguisher.
- Sparklers burn as hot as 1200 degrees Fahrenheit.

Teaching children about fire safety includes two equally important components: 1) why fire is dangerous and 2) what to do if a fire occurs. Children by nature do not understand the seriousness of a fire emergency; therefore, it is up to the adults who are the role models to teach them that fire is a tool, not a toy. Adults need to teach children not to play with matches and lighters. Adults also need to teach children that if they find matches and lighters, they should give them to adults in charge. Part of teaching young children about fire safety is making

an escape plan they can follow. Children three and younger can learn to follow the escape plan if they have practiced it often. It can mean the difference between life and death.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Web site has some excellent recommendations for developing an escape plan. Special considerations should be made for facilities caring for infants, toddlers, or children with special needs who are not able to escape on their own. How do we ensure that the individuals caring for children use common sense and follow the necessary precautions to make sure children are protected from harm?

Practicing a fire drill is as important for the adults as it is for the children. Do not assume that children who are not yet verbal will not benefit or learn from practicing emergency drills. Children will learn by doing the actual drills, not simply talking about them. To ensure that children with different schedules know the escape plan, caregivers must practice drills at different times and during different shifts of care. Many providers see that children “like” doing fire drills; to them it is not a chore, so make it a fun and important learning experience. Do not make the mistake of ignoring this responsibility in the winter months because it is cold outside. Statistics show that 50 percent of home fires occur in the winter months (December-February). Remember: Fire does not know which season it is.

Child care in a basement presents an added risk for children in care. Once started, a small flame can become a big fire in less than one minute. There will usually be more smoke than fire present, and

Fire safety publications are available from the Consumer Product Safety Commission in conjunction with **FireSafety.gov** for Kids. Its goal is to educate children ages 14 and younger on fire safety. The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) also provides public education. **SmokeyBear.com** also offers information about preventing fires.

the smoke will be filled with poisonous gases. Teach children to stay below the smoke and close to the floor when exiting. This can be practiced with children by using a blanket or a sheet, which represents the smoke. Two caregivers hold the blanket approximately two to three feet from the floor and the children crawl under it from one side to the other. Another idea is to have the children practice the fire drill by crawling to the window or door rather than walking. An emergency window must be accessible and unobstructed at all times. Children need to know where the window is located, how to access it, how to open it, and how to remove a screen, if necessary. Older children may end up helping younger children exit in a true emergency. Once out, children need to know where to go to meet the group. For children needing help, each adult must know which child or children he or she is responsible to get out of the window. Finally, teach children to go to the door or escape window as soon as they hear the signal; do not stop to put on coats or shoes, get a favorite toy or other items on the way. Children need to be taught that these items can be replaced. Their job is to exit as quickly as possible.

There are many fun and educational activities available which help teach children about fire safety. Have a firefighter come to your child care facility

FireSafety.gov for Kids Web site provides the following tips for teaching children about fire safety:

- **Escape route planning:** Designate two ways out of each room.
- **Windows are for more than fresh air:** Make sure windows are not stuck shut.
- **Second floor safety:** Escape ladders should be placed near second floor windows.
- **Feeling way to safety:** Children should practice feeling their way out of the home.
- **9-1-1 is a critical teaching skill:** Children should know about 911.
- **Smoke detectors 101:** Learn to associate the sound going off with a fire.
- **Out means stay out:** Teach children once they are out of a burning building, stay out.
- **It's in touch:** Teach children to check doors to see if they're hot.
- **Stop, drop, and roll:** Make sure children understand this if clothing catches fire.
- **Practice monthly:** Practice each escape route with children.

to talk to children about fire safety, show them the equipment used, clothing worn, and what to expect if they see a firefighter. Children may also enjoy a field trip to a local fire station to see similar things. Each year, schools and communities observe Fire Prevention Week during the month of October. A variety of fire safety activities and demonstrations are planned for children and their families with the intention of teaching and reminding communities how important fire safety is. Smoke houses, which look like rooms in an ordinary house, are available in some communities to teach children about fire safety and escaping from a burning room.

Finally, there is a wealth of information available for children and adults on the

Internet regarding fire safety. Many of the Web sites offer fact sheets on fire safety, which adults can use to teach children. Materials and pictures can be downloaded and printed for children to color or use as resources. Some Web sites offer interactive programs where children can create escape plans, practice escaping a hazardous situation, take a fire safety quiz, and more.

**Education is the first defense in preventing fires. Prepare. Practice. Prevent the unthinkable. Not taking fire safety seriously is a big mistake - fire is no joke.**



## FIRE EVACUATION PLANS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS AND HOMES

Jessica Coates, Licensing Consultant  
Eaton County

As a child care provider you are required to have a fire evacuation plan. Home providers are required to practice this plan every month, while centers practice it each quarter. These drills help children feel less frightened and teach them to act quickly and effectively.

The best fire evacuation plans have two exits out of every room. Drills should be practiced from each exit of the room to ensure that if the primary exit is blocked everyone will know the alternate exit. A window designated as an emergency exit should be checked regularly to ensure it opens easily and the screen can be taken out quickly.

Fire drills need to include exiting from basement and main level windows. Exiting from second or third-story windows should not be practiced during fire drills since these are considered rescue windows only. However, inform the children that the window could be used during a real fire if the primary exit is blocked. Have them practice lining up in front of the window and explain the exiting procedures.

Licensing rules for child care homes and centers require a fire plan that must include:

- The location of the nearest exits, including any window exits.
- The specific duties and responsibilities of all caregiving staff.
- A designated meeting place.
- Location of the fire extinguisher.
- The facility address, telephone number, and the major cross streets.

In addition, center fire evacuation plans also need a floor plan showing the exits and any specific plans for the evacuation of infants, toddlers, and children with special needs. Centers should also ensure that emergency exits meet the fire safety requirements listed in the licensing rules for child care centers.

A small fire can grow rapidly and a building can fill with thick black smoke within minutes. Do not waste any time saving personal property or putting

on shoes or coats. When dealing with a fire, every second counts. Never go back into a burning building for any reason and teach the children not to hide from fire fighters. Fire fighters are their friends and are there to help them.

Having a detailed fire evacuation plan and practicing it often is your best defense against a fire.



### DID YOU KNOW?

The Department of Homeland Security Federal Emergency Management Agency provides information about fire safety? More helpful information can be found at:

- Cooking Fire Safety  
[www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens)
- Electrical Fire Safety  
[www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens)
- Escape Planning  
[www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens)
- Home Fire Prevention  
[www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/citizens)
- Protecting Your Family From Fire  
[www.dhs.gov/downloads/pyff](http://www.dhs.gov/downloads/pyff)

## TORNADO SEASON UPON US

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*Adapted from an article by Diane Gillham, Retired Licensing Consultant, in Issue 53*

Some people consider April to October the best months to enjoy Michigan weather. This is also the prime period when tornadoes are most likely to occur in our state.

Child care licensing rules require both child care homes and centers to develop a written emergency plan, including a diagram of the escape route and safe haven, in case of a tornado. All staff need to know the difference between a tornado watch (conditions exist that could lead to a tornado - be prepared to take shelter - stay tuned to your local radio station for updates) and a tornado warning (a tornado has been sighted in the area - take shelter immediately).

Emergency plans should include the following:

- How you will know there is a tornado watch or warning (community siren, radio, television).
- Safe shelter area.
- Duties of all staff and volunteers present.
- Procedures children are to follow.
- Location of emergency equipment-flashlight, play equipment, non-perishable foods, water, first-aid items, battery operated radio, extra batteries, cell phone.

The shelter area should be located in the lowest interior section of the facility with supporting walls, away from windows and glass. A basement, center hallway, bathroom, or closet on the lowest level, are good choices. The chosen area should be away from corners, windows, doors and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside. Everyone should get under a sturdy table and use their arms to protect their head and neck. Do not open windows.

It is never safe to stay in a mobile home during a tornado emergency. Air will circulate underneath the mobile home and move upward, causing it to rise off the ground. Arrangements need to be made to use a safe shelter in a nearby building such as a clubhouse, school, store, etc. Plan to move to this area during a tornado watch to allow adequate time for everyone to safely reach the shelter. Rooms

with a wide free-span roof, such as a gymnasium, auditorium, or church may not be safe. This type of roof may collapse during a tornado.

Post your written plan and diagram in a conspicuous place. Review the plan with caregivers. Child care homes need to practice tornado drills at least once per month from April to October. Child care centers are required to practice tornado drills at least two times from April to October. A written record of all drills must be kept on file at the facility. These records must be kept for a minimum of four years.

Children may be transported during a tornado watch. Never transport once a tornado warning is issued. If you are in a vehicle when a tornado warning sounds:

- Get out of the vehicle immediately and seek shelter because the vehicle could become airborne.
- Get away from the vehicle.
- Find a building to seek shelter. If there is no building for shelter, lie down in the lowest area available away from trees, fences and poles.
- Cover head with hands and watch out for flying debris.
- Be aware of potential flooding.

Tornado watches and warnings need to be taken very seriously. Make sure to listen to the weather report and wait to hear the all-clear message before moving the children out of the tornado shelter area.

For additional information or guidance in choosing a shelter area, you may want to contact any of these agencies:

- American Red Cross  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- Local Emergency Management Coordinators  
[www.mspemd.org](http://www.mspemd.org)

## WATER EMERGENCIES IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS

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Let the fun in the sun begin! Water activities bring both happy times and danger to children in the child care setting. To maximize child safety, it is crucial that the child care provider directly supervise these activities at all times.

According to the National Safe Kids Campaign, drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related deaths for children ages one to four. In 2006 alone, 18 children under the age of five drowned in Michigan. Six children drowned between the ages of five and 14 years. This can be prevented. Seventy-five percent of all childhood drowning deaths occur when the caregiver becomes distracted and loses track of the child's activity. Child care providers in both homes and centers can be proactive to assure that children in their care do not become a statistic.

Water hazards can be located both on and off the child care property. Swimming pools, lakes, rivers, canals, streams, hot tubs, wading pools, and bathtubs are just a few of the hazards that are tempting for children to explore. More than half of drownings among children under age one occur in bathtubs. Other hazards are toilets, sinks, and buckets. It is estimated that 30 children drown in buckets containing water or other liquids every year.

Children do not make noise or splash around when they are drowning; they slip quietly into the water, and can drown within 30 seconds. Two minutes after submersion, the child loses consciousness and brain damage occurs in four to six minutes.

Although drowning is the most severe water emergency, there are other water emergencies that are of importance. Injuries can occur from diving board and/or slide accidents, playing around anchored boats, swimming during lightning storms, and electrical appliances near bodies of water, just to name a few. Children can contract illnesses from having contact with contaminated water. It is important to make sure that the body of water that children are swimming or playing in is clean.

As home child care providers, complying with the water hazards and water activities rule (R400.1921) will aid in the prevention of water emergencies. Highlights of this rule include, but are not limited to:

- Maintain the caregiver to child ratio as required (R400.1921 and R400.1910).
- Barriers with a minimum height of four feet must exist to prevent children from gaining access to any water hazard located on or adjacent to the property.
- Spa pools and hot tubs shall not be used while children are in care and require a locked hard cover.
- Wading pools need to be emptied and cleaned after each play period or when they become dirty or contaminated, and shall remain empty at all times they are not in use.
- Public swimming areas may be used only if there is a lifeguard present.
- Rescue equipment shall be readily accessible at all times.
- A working telephone shall be immediately accessible in the water activity area.
- There should be an established emergency plan for water emergencies.

Child care centers shall comply with the following rules to prevent water emergencies: caregiver to child ratios (R400.5502), supervision during swimming activities (R400.5502a), instructional swimming ratios and supervision (R400.5502b), and swimming activity area safety measures (R400.5502c). Highlights of these rules include, but are not limited to:

- A lifeguard shall be on duty at all swimming activities and shall not be included in the caregiver-to-child ration.
- All caregiving staff counted in the caregiver-to-child ratio shall be actively engaged in providing direct care and supervision and shall be physically able to assist children quickly.
- Instructional swim shall be conducted under the supervision of a qualified safety instructor in an organization where instructional swim is part of the organized program.

- Swimming areas shall be maintained in a clean and safe condition.
- A public or private pool used for swimming shall be inspected and issued a permit for operation by the environmental health authority.
- A working telephone and safety equipment shall be readily accessible on the premises.
- The use of private wading pools and hot tubs is prohibited.

Remember that for child care homes and centers, written parental permission is required before participating in water activities. Make sure that your CPR and First Aid certification is current so that you are able to effectively assist in an emergency.

Other helpful tips for prevention of water emergencies include:

- Never leave children in charge of other children.
- Empty all buckets immediately after use and store out of children's reach.
- Keep the toilet seat down and consider a toilet clip or safety lock to prevent children from accessing the standing water in the toilet.
- Never leave standing water in the bathtub or sink.
- Remove toys from in and around the pool area, especially riding toys.
- Install pool alarms and door locks.
- Install barriers and fencing whenever possible.
- Do not swim during lightning storms.
- Keep electrical appliances away from the pool.
- Do not swim in areas where boats are anchored or active.
- Check the water first, if a child is missing.

Consider water activities such as hoses and sprinklers. Be creative with these two options, as they can be great fun for children. Children enjoy playing with water just as much as being in the water.

The best prevention for water emergencies is constant supervision. Enjoy the summer, be safe and have fun!



Soft side pools that are used in back yards have significant safety issues.

- This type of pool tends to settle below four feet in height.
- The sides are not straight possibly allowing children to use the side to climb into the pool.
- When the pool loses air and becomes soft or it is punctured it can possibly entrap a child.

Local zoning ordinances may require fencing around these pools. If barriers are not in place with this type of pool, consultants may cite a violation of R400.1921(1).

## BEING PREPARED: SERIOUS ACCIDENT AND INJURY PLANS FOR CHILD CARE HOMES AND CENTERS

Erika Bigelow, Licensing Consultant  
Eaton County

Emergencies can arise in an instant. Without warning, children can sustain serious accidents or injuries that require immediate response from the caregiver.

The licensing rules for family and group child care homes and for child care centers require that there be a written plan or procedure for the care of children in the event of a serious accident or injury.

The technical assistance and consultation manual for child care homes and centers states a written plan for serious accidents or injuries provides an opportunity to prepare and prevent poor judgment, which can happen under the stress of an emergency.

All facilities should include the following in their serious accident or injury plan:

- Phone number for emergency personnel, including Poison Control.
- Location of emergency supplies.

- Location of child information cards.
- Process used for assessing the child's injury to determine if medical treatment is needed.
- Plan for adequate supervision of the other children in care.
- Phone number of the designated emergency person.

The written plans should be clearly written and should include all necessary information to allow anyone to easily follow the plan. Train staff on the procedures and their responsibilities and review the plans often!

Family and group homes must post the plan on each floor where child care is provided. It is recommended that child care centers post a copy of the serious injury plan in each room used by children.

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[www.mi4c.org/teach](http://www.mi4c.org/teach)

## OUTDOOR PLAY EQUIPMENT FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Warren Wheeler  
Certified Playground Safety Inspector

The Michigan Playground Equipment Safety Act refers to the ASTM F1487-05. The ASTM F1487-05 is an updated version of the ASTM F1487-01 and is the current standard used by the National Playground Safety Institute's (NPSI) Certified Playground Safety Inspectors (CPSI). Some inspectors may also use the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Publication No. 325, but the Michigan Playground Equipment Safety Act clearly refers to the ASTM standard.

In general, the only playground equipment that complies with the ASTM F1487-01 or 05 is equipment designated as "commercial playground equipment." There are many manufacturers including GameTime, Little Tikes Commercial, Burke, Miracle, Big Toys, Landscape Structures and Play World to mention just a few. **Caution is advised with Little Tikes because they produce residential equipment with the same name.** To comply with ASTM F1487-01 or 05, the equipment must indicate that it is "Little Tikes Commercial."

Another problem is that some manufactures state that their playground equipment "complies with ASTM standards," which may be true. However, there are many ASTM standards, including standards for residential backyard playground

equipment. A child care center must be sure that the equipment purchased complies with ASTM F1487-05 (ASTM F1487-01 is also acceptable).

Playground structures and equipment that are sold by Lowe's, Home Depot, Menard's, Rainbow and other "big box" stores usually do not comply with the ASTM F1487-05 standards. If a center decides to purchase equipment from a retail store, be sure to get written documentation that the equipment complies with the ASTM F1487-05 (and only ASTM F1487-05!).

The commercial manufactures noted above usually offer commercial composite plastic play structures for the 2-5 year age group that are in the \$5,000 range, comply with the ASTM F1487-05 standard, and are durable and fun. A professional can install this equipment in less than a day or you can install it over a couple days. The equipment can also be moved to a new site if the center outgrows its current facility.

ED. Note: Mr. Wheeler has been an independent playground specialist since 1989 and a Certified Playground Safety Inspector since 1996. He does playground inspections statewide. You can email Mr. Wheeler at [safeplay@hughes.net](mailto:safeplay@hughes.net) or call him at (616)437-6993.



**UPCOMING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS, CLASSES AND OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES**

Upper Peninsula Early Childhood Conference  
April 25-26, 2008  
Marquette, MI  
(866) 424-4532  
(906) 228-3362

National Smart Start Conference  
North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.  
May 6-9, 2008  
Greensboro, NC  
(901) 821-7999  
[info@ncsmartstart.org](mailto:info@ncsmartstart.org)  
[www.ncsmartstart.org](http://www.ncsmartstart.org)

High/Scope International Conference  
High/Scope Educations Research Foundation  
May 7-9, 2008  
Ypsilanti, MI  
(734) 485-2000  
[www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org)

National Institute for Early Childhood  
Professional Development  
National Association for the Education of Young  
Children  
June 8-11, 2008  
New Orleans, LA  
(800) 424-2460  
[www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Upper Peninsula AYC Early Childhood  
Conference  
October 18, 2008  
Northern Michigan University  
Marquette, MI  
Judy Place (906) 226-9904  
[place@nmu.edu](mailto:place@nmu.edu)

Early Childhood Administrators Conference  
Children's Resource Network  
October 2008  
Southgate, MI  
(734) 753-0543

**ONGOING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLASSES**

(Call organization for classes, dates, and times.)

**Michigan 4C Association**  
[www.mi4c.org](http://www.mi4c.org)  
(517) 351-4171  
(800) 950-4171

**Michigan State University Extension**  
[www.fcs.msue.msu.edu/bkc/](http://www.fcs.msue.msu.edu/bkc/)  
(517) 432-7654

**Child Care Expulsion Prevention (CCEP)**  
Social and Emotional Training Series  
(248) 739-1414  
[mackrain@aol.com](mailto:mackrain@aol.com)

**T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps)**  
[www.mi4c.org/teach](http://www.mi4c.org/teach)  
(866) MITEACH  
(866) 648-3224

**HighScope Training Opportunities**  
[www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org)  
(734) 485-2000 ext. 234

## RESOURCES: Emergency Preparedness

Boyse, K., Safety-Water and Pool Safety, Online: [www.med.umich.edu](http://www.med.umich.edu)

Burnedchildrenrecovery.org - 24-hour hotline 1-800-799-BURN

Drowning Prevention. Online: [www.healthyfamiliesfla.org](http://www.healthyfamiliesfla.org)

Kram, K. (2000). Security in Day Care Facilities. Michigan Child Care Matters, 54, p.9.

Michigan Child Death Review. Drowning., Online: [www.keepingkidsalive.org](http://www.keepingkidsalive.org)

Michigan Department of Community Health (2007). Unintentional Fatal Injuries 2001-2006, Michigan Residents. Online: [www.mdch.state.mi.us](http://www.mdch.state.mi.us)

Michigan School Lockdown/Shelter-in-Place Drill Policy. (2006). Michigan Department of Education, Department of Michigan State Police, and Department of Labor and Economic Growth. 517-332-2521, [www.michigan.gov/msp](http://www.michigan.gov/msp)

Montgomery County Maryland Department of Health and Human Services Preparedness and Response Program. Emergency Responses: Evaluate Your Risks. Maryland: Montgomery County, 2006.

Ready to Respond Emergency Preparedness Plan for Early Care and Education Centers. (2003). Bright Horizons Family Solutions. Retrieved October 23, 2007 from [http://www.brighthorizons.com/talktochildren/docs/emergency\\_plan.doc](http://www.brighthorizons.com/talktochildren/docs/emergency_plan.doc)

**The Barry-Eaton District Health Dept. will be conducting environmental health training for licensed child care facilities. This training may be counted toward the annual requirement for licensed child care homes.**

**The primary focus of the training will be:**

- Safe food practices.
- Personal hygiene.
- Responding to health concerns.
- Providing a safe environment.
- Public health awareness.

**If you are interested in attending or hosting a training workshop, please contact Dur Efaw at the Barry-Eaton District Health Dept. by calling (517) 541-2629 or email at [defaw@hline.org](mailto:defaw@hline.org).**

The Michigan 4C Association is developing a series of Child Care Administration trainings that will be offered across the state to enable program directors to earn 3.0 CEU's of credit. The courses will include classroom, correspondence and online offerings beginning spring of 2008.

For information about the training courses available in your area, contact **1-866-4CHILDCARE (1-866-424-4532).**

For more information visit **[www.mi4c.org](http://www.mi4c.org)** or email the MI4C Association at **[admin@mi4c.org](mailto:admin@mi4c.org)**.

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## CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION INFANT/CHILD PRODUCT RECALLS (not including toys)

These recalls have been added since the last issue:

- Ellaroo recalls infant sling carriers due to fall hazard.
- Munire Furniture recalls cribs due to fall hazard.
- Bassettbaby Drop-Side Cribs recalled due to entrapment and strangulation hazard.
- Netshops recalls children's table and chair sets due to violation of lead paint standard.
- Discount School Supply recalls play mats due to violation of lead paint standard.
- Shims Bargain recalls pacifiers due to choking hazard.
- Infantino® recalls infant teethers due to choking hazard.
- RC2 recalls The First Years™ Children's Feeding Seats due to fall hazard.
- RC2 recalls potty training seats due to violation of lead paint standard.
- Stokke announces recall of certain Xplory® Strollers due to front wheel detachment.
- Flashing Pacifiers recalled by Sailing (U.S.) International Corp. due to choking hazard.
- Children's Wooden Storage Rack recalled by Jetmax International.
- Cribs sold by Bassettbaby recalled due to entrapment and strangulation hazard.
- Serious head injuries prompt recall of Bumbo Baby Sitter Seats.

Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Web site:  
[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).

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